THE RAINMAKER

by

Gwen Pharis

This play was written under the terms of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project. It may be produced in Alberta without payment of royalty until September 30th, 1947. Royalty for productions outside of Alberta is $5.00 for each performance, the royalty payable to the Drama Division, Department of Fine Arts, University of Alberta.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

To Professor Robert E. Gard, former Director of the Alberta Folklore and Local History Project, I am deeply indebted for his help and interest in the play and for permission to adapt some characters, scenes and ideas in his radio play "Hatfield, the Rainmaker" (C.B.C. May, 1945) for use in the stage play. To Maryo Kimball Gard for many suggestions, my thanks also.

THE RAINMAKER was first produced by the School of Fine Arts at Banff on the evening of August 22nd, 1945, with the following cast:

TOM	Ted Follows, Winnipeg, Man.
SARAH	Barbara Nelson, Moose Jaw, Sask.
MARG	Elda Hutchinson, Regina, Sask.
SAM	Les Morris, Moose Jaw, Sask.
JOE	Wade Magrum, Peace River, Alta.
MIRANDA	Kay Allingham, Saskatoon, Sask.
TIM	Dave Dornan, Victoria, B.C.
WALT	John Komanchuk, Lethbridge, Alta.
ED	Sandy Dmytrow, Smoky Lake, Alta.
BESSIE	Helen Glyde, Calgary, Alta.
CLARA	Gwen Bond, Regina, Sask.
BERT	Ben Tanner, Lethbridge, Alta.
HATFIELD	Ron Marvin, Moose Jaw, Sask.
MAYOR	Kay Greene, Glenwood, Alta.
CISSY	Mary Butters, Victoria, B.C.
JODY	Allan Kerr, Calgary, Alta.
WILLIE	Blake Lilly, Calgary, Alta.
JIMMY	Bernard Baxter, Saskatoon, Sask.
CAROLINE	Lillian McMaster, Peace River, Alta.
DORIS	Annemarie Gibson, Medicine Hat, Alta.
YOUNG BOY	Bill Yule, Nanton, Alta.

CITIZENS OF MEDICINE HAT:

Audrey Mitchell, Edmonton, Alberta
Kay Clark, Prince George, B.C.
Clare Greene, Victoria, B.C.
Therese McLeod, Saskatoon, Sask.
Charles Harrison, Moose Jaw, Sask.
Merie Evanuk, Edmonton, Alberta
Bernice Fawcett, Victoria, B.C.
Lillian Gardner, Salt Lake City, Utah

Directed by Sydney Risk

Production notes based on the original performance of the play will be found at the end of this copy.

CHARACTERS:

TOM	a farmer
MARG	Tom's wife
SAM	a man past middle-age
JOE	a barker
MIRANDA	a fortune-teller
ED	a farmer
SARAH	his wife
TIM	a farmer
WALT	a farmer
BENNY	a boy of 11
DAVID	a boy of about 12 or 13
CHRIS	a boy of about 14 or 15
BERT	a farmer
JODY	a Negro lad
CISSY	a girl of 16
JIMMY	a young man
HATFIELD	a rotund little man, past middle age
MAYOR BURGESS ...	
WILLIE	the Lamplighter
CAROLINE	a middle-aged woman

TOWNSPEOPLE, FARMERS, BANDSMEN

SCENE: A street corner in Medicine Hat, Alberta

TIME: The main action of the play takes place on May 22nd, 1921. The epilogue and prologue take place in May, 1945.

(As the curtain rises, TOM is found seated on a bench down right. He is a man of between 45 and 50 years. The street lamp throws a light on TOM but the rest of the stage is in deep shadow. SARAH, a middle-aged, neatly dressed woman, comes hurrying down the street towards home. As she crosses the stage she sees TOM and pauses.)

SARAH: Why, Tom Arnold!

TOM: Hello, Sarah.

SARAH: What are you doing in town at this hour?

TOM: Just sitting here, Sarah, till train time. I've got some tractor parts coming from Calgary.

SARAH: You come right along home with me and visit with Ed awhile. It looks like rain.

TOM: Thanks, Sarah, I'll wait. Rain never hurt a farmer any.

SARAH: We've been meaning to get out to see you, Tom, but the car's broke down.

TOM: I'll always be glad to see you. The place don't look the same though -- without Marg.

SARAH: I know, Tom.

TOM: Twenty-four years ago, Sarah, Marg and I were waiting for the night train, right here.

SARAH: Twenty-four years. That's a while ago, isn't it? (A trace of wonder at the swift passing of the years.) Why, we were young then, Tom.

TOM: Yes. We were young. And Marg and I were waiting on the train and the rest of the folks were waiting on Hatfield. Do you remember Hatfield, Sarah?

SARAH: I should. Ed and I put up a hundred dollars to bring him here.

TOM: I was looking through some of Marg's things today. Found a clipping about Hatfield. (He shows SARAH an envelope.) Just this clipping and a black button. Medicine Hat, May 22nd, 1921. That's Marg's writing. Don't know what she'd want with a button.

SARAH: (Gently) Likely one of yours, or the children's, Tom. It's little things a woman stores away in boxes and in her heart. Sure you won't come over to the house? (She starts to move off.)

TOM: No thank you, Sarah. You've a pretty place there now.

SARAH: Yes, it's pretty. And Ed can't work so hard in town. Well, good night, Tom. (She moves off left.)

TOM: Good night, Sarah. (He sits looking at the envelope and speaks softly.) I always wanted Marg to have a pretty place before she died, but she never got it.

(Then MARG is a soft voice and a dim, quiet figure behind him. He does not know she is there but her love for him is a warm and living thing.)

MARG: Why, Tom Arnold, our place was beautiful those last years; wild cucumber vines all around the porch and my geraniums at the window -- I loved every corner of it.

TOM: (Looking at the clipping.) May 22nd, 1921.

MARG: I thought I could leave you, Tom. I must have been awfully young and foolish. (There is a lilt of laughter behind the words.)

TOM: (Reading.) "A banquet in honor of Mr. Charles Hatfield, our distinguished guest from California, was held last evening in the Moose Hall."

MARG: Who was Hatfield, Tom? I remember about the button and the train, but the rest of it isn't quite clear any more. Who was Hatfield?

TOM: (Musing over the clipping.) Charles Hatfield. Hatfield, the Rainmaker,

(The light above TOM dims and light begins to come up at the back of the stage. A crowd busy and noisy comes in from the entrance at back and as they enter TOM and MARG slip unnoticed off the stage. The sound of a merry-go-round is heard off stage right. The lights reveal a corner of a village street. The bench remains down stage right. Back stage a picket fence runs from the right corner to near centre. In front of the fence is a rude stall or counter. About centre back is a platform or set of steps that might be the front of a simple public building. A path leads off towards the town at back left. Up stage left is a small tent decorated with the signs of the Zodiac and in front of the tent a chair and stand on which is a crystal ball. Down stage from the tent is a fairly high platform which gives a view of the "towers" off left. The path to the towers is down stage left. The women are wearing the fashions of 1921 but are not well dressed. The scene has an air of strained gaiety based on an attempt to rise above despair.

As the lights come up JOE is at his platform, down left, with a small megaphone. MIRANDA is seated in front of the fortune-telling tent. CHRIS, a boy of 14 or 15, is arranging a portable lemonade stand near the path up right. SAM, a man past middle age, seats himself on the bench down right. He has an accordion, banjo or mouth organ, and plays softly as the scene goes on. TIM and WALT come in from the fair ground.)

JOE: Come on, Gentlemen, place your bets. Hatfield versus the Elements. Will it rain before midnight? Ten cents a ticket. Step right up.

TIM: Hatfield! I wouldn't bet on that guy if I had a nickel.

WALT: I've got a nickel but I'm not risking it.

JOE: He made it rain in California, folks. He'll make it rain in Medicine Hat.

TIM: You think so, Brother, that's fine!

WALT: (Kicking at the dust.) Better take off your shoes, boy, you may get them muddy.

JOE: That's right, sir. Bet on Hatfield. By midnight you'll be in mud up to your ankles.

TIM: I remember it raining in this country once. Water come right down out of the sky.

WALT: You got to show me.

TIM: My brother plumb swooned away with the shock. Took us four hours to bring him to.

WALT: You don't say. Four hours.

TIM: We tried everything. Glass of water. Glass of wine. Whiskey. (to JOE) You know what finally revived him?

JOE: Couldn't guess.

TIM: Glass full of dust. Brought him right to. That was the stuff he was used to -- only thing that could save him.

JOE: Thanks, I'll remember that one.

(SAM plays softly a few measures of "It ain't gonna rain no more." ED and SARAH come in with some cases of eggs and a few boxes of seedlings.)

MIRANDA: (As ED passes her to go towards the stall, down right.) Tell your fortune, sir. Twenty five cents to know the future.

ED: (Shaking his head and smiling.) Lady, if I had two bits I'd buy a pair of socks.

SARAH: (Rather shy and apologetic.) We're going to set up a little stall ourselves. (To BENNY, a boy of about 11 who is behind her.) Now, Benny, don't you get in anybody's way.

BENNY: (Fascinated by JOE and MIRANDA.) No, Aunt Sarah.

(TIM and WALTER seat themselves on the steps, back centre. They nod to ED and SARAH. SAM stops playing.)

SAM: How you doing, Ed?

ED: (Arranging the seedlings.) Two more days without rain and I'm burnt out.

SARAH: Same as last year.

ED: And the year before.

SAM: Me too.

SARAH: Looks like Hatfield can't do nothing. After all our hoping.

TIM: He's done one thing, Sarah. Made us look like a bunch of fools.

WALT: And how they're laughing! The whole Dominion is busting its sides.

TIM: Headlines from Vancouver to Halifax -- "Medicine Hat hires a Rainmaker."

SARAH: Well, it was a chance and we took it.

WALT: Hatfield took us, you mean.

ED: He won't get paid unless it rains tonight.

WALT: He gets expenses. (Bitterly.) Railway, hotel, fried chicken and strawberries.

SARAH: Tenth day ain't quite over, Walter. It could rain yet.

JOE: That's right, Lady, and it will rain. Those thirty-foot towers will disturb the sky. (to SAM) Come on, sir. Three for a quarter. Bet on Hatfield.

SAM: Sorry, brother, the sky ain't disturbed enough. From where I'm sitting the sky ain't even impressed.

(More people come in from the back. The younger ones are gay but the older ones have a strained, tired look. The sight of the crowd moves JOE to renewed fervour. CHRIS tries to shout his wares in the manner of a tried Barker.)

CHRIS: Lemonade. Ice cold. How about it?

(The Merry-go-round is heard again off stage.)

JOE: Place your money on the Rainmaker, folks. Name your time. You stand to win a hundred dollars. Step right up. (One or two men pause to buy tickets.) That's right, Mister. Have faith in Hatfield and win a hundred dollars. Take a chance. Ten cents a ticket.

MIRANDA: Twenty-five cents for a private reading with Madame Miranda. Foretold the sinking of the Titanic. Foretold the Halifax fire.

(BENNY sees another boy of his own age who has just come in.)

BENNY: Hi, Davie.

DAVID: Hi.

BENNY: (Moving over to DAVID) What you doing?

DAVID: Just looking.

BENNY: Me too.

DAVID: 'Taint much. Figured there'd be a snake charmer.

BENNY: Say, you ought to been to the station.

DAVID: Why?

BENNY: I saw his trunk. (He indicates JOE.) All covered with stickers. Know what they said?

DAVID: No.

BENNY: Saskatoon, Chicago, Nashville and New Orleans. Honest.

DAVID: Boy. (Looking at JOE.) Been all over, eh?

BENNY: I bet he's seen the ocean.

DAVID: Dare you to ask him.

BENNY: Come on, then. (They move towards JOE.)

JOE: Ten cents, folks. Will it rain before midnight? Ten cents a ticket.

BENNY: Excuse me, mister.

JOE: Yes, son, what is it?

BENNY: We wanted to ask -- we was wondering -- Say, Mister, have you ever seen the ocean?

JOE: Ocean? Which ocean?

DAVID: Any ocean?

JOE: (Chewing at a match and studying.) I seen the Atlantic once.

BENNY: What was it like?

JOE: Well, I'll tell you. There's a lot of water there. Big.

BENNY: (Nodding.) Yeah, I thought so.

JOE: Then I seen the Pacific a couple of times.

BENNY: What's it like?

JOE: Real big.

BENNY: Waves coming in?

JOE: All the time. High. High as them towers sometimes.

DAVID: Golly!

BENNY: Tides?

JOE: Tides, regular. In and out. In and out. (His hand unconsciously describes the motion.) Never missed in ten thousand years.

BENNY: (With deep satisfaction.) Yeah, that's the way it is, all right. I thought so.

DAVID: Many people get drowned when the tide comes in?

JOE: All the time. Wait too long and the tide sweeps over them. Can't seem to learn.

BENNY: Thanks, Mister.

DAVID: Yeah, thanks.

JOE: Glad to oblige. Ten cents, folks. Bet on Hatfield. Ten cents a --

(BENNY and DAVID moving towards right.)

BENNY: Can you beat it? Us guys meeting up with a man like that. Been everywhere, seen everything. Ain't life amazing?

DAVID: Sure is. We better go tell Lee Wong. Come on. (They go out.)

CHRIS: (Moving among the crowd who are going out right.) Ice cold. Home made. How about it? Glass of lemonade, Mr. Sprague?

BERT: How much, son?

CHRIS: Ten cents.

BERT: (Embarrassed.) Give me half a glass, Chris.

CHRIS: Thanks. It's not very sweet, Mr. Sprague.

BERT: (Draining the glass.) It's fine, son. Most water I've seen in ten years. (He moves on out with the crowd.)

MIRANDA: Know the future, folks. Miranda has traveled in Hindustan, Rangoon, Vienna and Arabia. All the secrets of the ancient East. Will you get your wish? Will you find your heart's desire?

(Most of the crowd has gone out.)

SARAH: Guess we're all wishing for just one thing, ain't we -- rain?

WALT: (Savagely at the sky.) Yeah, rain.

(Like a sigh the word is repeated over the little group, half to themselves and half to the heavens. The sigh blends into the voice of JODY, a slight Negro lad who has come in from the back and is standing with his face lifted to the sky.)

JODY: Oh, Lordy, Lordy, if we could have one good steady rain.

(The silence is broken by the sound of a Band off stage right.)

CHRIS: (Taking up his stand.) Think I'll see what I can do over there.

WALT: Come on, Tim. We can listen to the band free.

ED: You go on, Sarah.

SAM: Both of you go. I'll keep an eye on your stuff.

ED: Thanks, Sam. Don't look like there'll be much buying tonight.

SARAH: Maybe they should have cancelled the carnival.

ED: Now who's losing faith in Hatfield?

SARAH: I don't really think he can make it rain, Ed, but I just keep on wishing he could.

ED: Yeah, I know. (They go out.)

MIRANDA: (Turning angrily to JOE.) Some ideas, you have!

JOE: Now Randy --

MIRANDA: Dragging us here from Winnipeg to muscle in on Hatfield's racket.

JOE: Hatfield hasn't got a racket.

MIRANDA: Not after tonight, he hasn't. Joe do you honestly believe Hatfield can make it rain?

JOE: I seen him do it twice, that's all.

MIRANDA: You poor long-eared fool. (With anger and affection.) You've played small-time stands for twenty years and still believe in the dog-headed man.

JOE: Hatfield's a scientist.

MIRANDA: If I was Hatfield I'd get out of town before midnight. These folks may want to celebrate the rain they didn't have, the rain they've got to have that don't come. Half a glass of lemonade! Oh my God! (There is a touch of hysteria in her voice. She sits down and gazes moodily into the crystal.)

(CISSY, a pretty girl of about sixteen, shabbily dressed, enters. She carries a basket of paper souvenirs and a few colored balloons.)

CISSY: Souvenirs of Hatfield. Hand-made, miniature umbrellas. (She sees there are only three people there.) Guess I may as well save my breath. (She sits on the corner of the steps.)

SAM: (Taking one of the umbrellas.) Make these, Cissy? (CISSY nods.) Well aren't they pretty?

CISSY: I thought they were.

SAM: Not selling eh?

CISSY: Everybody laughs. If we'd had a shower even ---

SAM: How much?

CISSY: Ten cents.

SAM: I'll take them all.

CISSY: (Getting up quickly.) Oh no, you're just feeling sorry for me.

SAM: Hell's Bells, Cissy, I never felt sorry for anybody. Haven't time. I'm having a birthday party next week and can use these for decorations.

CISSY: Honest?

SAM: Honest Injun.

CISSY: (Doubtfully.) There's forty three.

SAM: (Counting his money.) Let's see. I need thirty-seven. Three seventy -- that's right. You take out six.

CISSY: You're sure?

SAM: Sure. Now you run on and have a good time.

CISSY: Oh thank you, Mr. Bruce. You see Dad broke his pipe so he quit smoking to save the money. He's smoked for twenty years and --

SAM: Go on, then. Buy your Dad some tobacco. (CISSY runs out.)

MIRANDA: (With irritable tenderness.) Now what you going to do with them? Make yourself a paper skirt?

SAM: (Standing several of the bright little umbrellas up in the cracks of the counter.) Might at that.

MIRANDA: (Ironically and softly without intonation.) Will you get your wish? Will you find the golden apple of the sun?

(SAM begins to strum softly. CHARLES HATFIELD enters. He is dressed in new and good clothes, (rather flashy) and a top or bowler hat. He is a rotund little man, past middle age.)

HATFIELD: Good evening, friends, good evening.

MIRANDA: Maybe you can answer that one, Mr. Rainmaker.

HATFIELD: I beg your pardon, Madame. Answer what?

JOE: Don't mind her, Mr. Hatfield.

MIRANDA: Will they get their wish? Is it going to rain? That's all.

HATFIELD: Rain? Of course it will rain. My solution has been a little static, but everything's all right. Everything's all right I tell you.

JOE: Just what I said.

HATFIELD: All we need is patience, a little patience.

SAM: That blue sky can make a man feel mighty powerless, can't it, Hatfield?

HATFIELD: Not me. I refuse to feel powerless. I walk in the van of progress. It's people like you -- and you, madame -- doubters, that hold up the march.

MIRANDA: I only asked you if it was going to rain.

HATFIELD: It's bound to rain, Madame. Sooner or later it's bound to rain.

MIRANDA: I see.

JOE: (As BENNY asked for corroboration about the ocean so JOE turns to HATFIELD.) You believe in yourself, don't you, Hatfield?

HATFIELD: Eh, what's that?

JOE: You can do it, can't you? You can make it rain? You think you can?

HATFIELD: Believe in myself? My dear fellow, as Ben Franklin harnessed the lightning so Charles Hatfield has harnessed the rainfall. Science, dear fellow, pure science.

MIRANDA: P. T. Barnum was a wise old man.

JOE: Randy.

(SAM has been playing "It ain't gonna rain no more.")

HATFIELD: Look here, sir, don't you know any other song?

SAM: (Gently.) Know some. What's wrong with this one.

HATFIELD: It gets on my nerves that's all. I don't like it. Never have liked it.

SAM: Starts raining, I'll sure change my song.

HATFIELD: Songs like that discourage folks, undermine their morale.

MIRANDA: Folks here don't need a song to discourage them. Folks here are about to hit bottom. You're their last straw, Mr. Rainmaker, and they're clinging to you. But they're losing their faith -- in you, themselves, everything. It's slipping away from them, out of their faces and their hearts and their bones. It's drying up, like their crops, like dust.

HATFIELD: (For a moment shorn of all pretense and bravado.) I know it. That's why I can't fail. I've tested the solutions twenty times -- by now we should have had three inches of moisture.

JOE: (Excited.) Look, Mr. Hatfield, there's a little cloud over by the towers right now.

HATFIELD: (Turning.) You're right, my good man, you're right. (He leaps on JOE's platform.) See that cloud. I brought that cloud. See it! (Desperately.) There's time. There's still time, I tell you.

(WILLIE the LAMPLIGHTER comes in on this last speech. He is an old man with the eyes of a fanatic.)

WILLIE: Yes, there's still time, Charles Hatfield, time to repent.

HATFIELD: (Startled.) Who are you?

WILLIE: I'm a gleaner in the granary of the Lord, a saver of lost souls. Pluck your limbs from the burning, Charles Hatfield. Repent before it is too late.

HATFIELD: My dear fellow --

WILLIE: You have dared to tamper with the elements. No man, no man, Charles Hatfield, shall make the tempest rage or the rain to fall. You are lost, lost in the bottomless. (He lights the gas lamp.)

HATFIELD: Now, now, my man, don't go on that way. Get your facts right. Science is my mistress.

WILLIE: Science! Satan's handmaiden. Be warned for your hour is at hand and the day of judgment. Hell's mouth gapes, Charles Hatfield, Hell's mouth gapes. (WILLIE goes out.)

HATFIELD: (Condescendingly.) The town character, I suppose?

SAM: Oh no, just old Willie Sims trying to get to heaven on a narrow road. Got bogged down at the first turn.

MIRANDA: There's a lot of us like that, ain't there -- crying in the wilderness?

(The MAYOR enters. He is a self-important man, a bit excited. He has a gold chain draped across his front. His dress may be 'outlandishly' formal if desired. He goes at once to HATFIELD and stands looking up at him.)

MAYOR: Mr. Hatfield. Mr. Hatfield.

HATFIELD: Mayor Burgess.

MAYOR: I've been looking all over for you. I want you to lead the procession.

HATFIELD: I thought you cancelled it.

MAYOR: I did. But folks seem restless. A little fanfare may be a good thing, brighten things up.

HATFIELD: Very well. I am your servant.

MAYOR: Right this way. Right this way. (He guides HATFIELD towards the right.) I'll expect you to make a speech.

JOE: Tell them about you and Ben Franklin, Hatfield.

MIRANDA: (Softly.) Half wolf, half alligator.

JOE: Atheist.

(SAM and MIRANDA chuckle quietly as SAM resumes a few measures of his theme song.)

HATFIELD: (Grimly to the Mayor as they pass SAM.) The only song he knows.

MAYOR: Come on, Sam, be a booster, not a knocker.

SAM: All right, Mayor, I'll stop. (The MAYOR and HATFIELD go out. SAM turns to JOE and MIRANDA.) Let's walk over and join the procession. This stuff will be all right.

MIRANDA: (Taking up her crystal.) Mustn't forget the future.

SAM: No? Most people too burdened down with the past to remember it.

(They go out right. As they leave TOM and MARG enter from the back. TOM is carrying a suitcase which he places on the bench.)

TOM: (Awkwardly.) I guess everybody's gone to see the parade.

MARG: Yes.

TOM: You want to go over.

MARG: Not now.

TOM: There's a cloud out East. Might shower out that way.

MARG: It might.

(A pause.)

TOM: I'll water your geraniums, Marg.

MARG: (Hesitantly.) I told Mrs. Pearson she could have them. I didn't think you'd want to bother.

TOM: You don't figure on coming back, do you, Marg?

MARG: I don't know, Tom.

TOM: I should have let you go two weeks ago.

MARG: (Pleading.) Sell out, Tom. Don't hang on.

TOM: I couldn't. Not now. I've worked too hard, sweated, planned. Can't you see?

MARG: Not any more.

TOM: We still care about each other, Marg. That's the same?

MARG: I don't know. I think so. But nobody can go on fighting dust forever.

TOM: (Withdrawing.) No, I guess not. Well, I'll get the cheque cashed. (He starts toward the path at back but turns as he gets to the platform steps.) Marg, when I asked you to stay, until tonight, I wasn't pinning my faith on Hatfield, exactly. I was believing in us, what we've had. I've been praying that something would happen, some kind of a miracle, a rain, maybe, that would bring us back together the way we have been. (He speaks with difficulty, embarrassed by the attempt to put his emotion into words.) I was so sure, I've been kind of light-hearted all week. But I guess it ain't that way. I guess if people have to depend on something outside, like a rain, to keep them together, why they just aren't worth saving. Maybe there ain't anything, anybody caring about people anyway. I don't know. (He has twisted at a button on his jacket and it falls on the ground.) There goes a button. (He picks it up.)

MARG: I'll sew it on.

TOM: No, keep it. (He hands it to her.) Keep it as a souvenir of Tom, the dude rancher of Medicine Hat. (His tone is bitter. As she takes the button he looks at her and speaks involuntarily.) Gosh, Marg, you're pretty.

MARG: Tom, I -- (There are tears in her eyes.)

TOM: (Brusquely turning away.) You wait here. I'll get the money. (He starts off at back very quickly.)

MARG: Tom! Wait, Tom. (But he doesn't hear.)

(JODY comes in and meets TOM.)

JODY: Evening, Mr. Arnold.

TOM: Hello, Jody.

(TOM goes out. JODY, seeing MARG, pauses.)

JODY: I'm going down to the station, Mrs. Arnold. You want me to take your suitcase?

MARG: No, thanks, Jody. Leave it.

JODY: Here comes the Band. Maybe they can pipe a few rain clouds over.

MARG: I wish they could, Jody.

JODY: (As he goes out left.) Me too, Mrs. Arnold. I sure do.

(BENNY and DAVID come in with some firecrackers.)

BENNY: How many you got?

DAVID: Six.

BENNY: So have I. We've got firecrackers, Mrs. Arnold.

DAVID: Lee Wong gave them to us.

BENNY: We're going to contribute them.

MARG: Contribute them?

BENNY: To the parade. They're the only firecrackers in town.

DAVID: We're going to set them all off at once -- bang, bang, bang.

(They pause by the fence to examine their treasures.)

(JIMMY, a boy of 17 or 18 enters. He looks around, then speaks to MARG.)

JIMMY: Excuse me, do you happen to know Cissy Mills?

MARG: Why no, I'm sorry, I don't.

JIMMY: I just thought you might have seen her. I was looking for her.

MARG: I don't think she's been through here.

JIMMY: It's all right. It's not important at all! (As he starts off right.) I just thought you might happen to --- You'd know her if you saw her. Brown eyes and soft hair and she's kind of -- well, she's just a slip of a thing.

MARG: I'll look out for her.

JIMMY: Thanks. I might just happen to run into her out here. It's not important at all. (He gets himself off the stage in some embarrassment.)

BENNY: Look, they're coming this way.

DAVID: Let's get right behind HATFIELD.

BENNY: You got your matches?

DAVID: Yeah.

(The sound of the BAND is louder. The MAYOR comes in with the five-piece Band following.)

MAYOR: Now, now, boys. Clear the way. Clear the way. Don't give us any trouble here. Clear the way for the procession. Hatfield's coming. Hatfield's coming. (He shoos the boys to one side.) (The BAND breaks off abruptly.) What's the matter with you fellows? Go on playing. You hear me. Play something.

BAND LEADER: Too dry. We was only hired to play if it rained.

PLAYER: Tell Hatfield when he does his job we'll play for him.

MAYOR: You're fired.

BAND LEADER: No, we quit.

PLAYER: It's your party, Mayor. Take it away.

MAYOR: Deserters.

CROWD: Where's the rain, Mayor?
Yeah, some rain.
We been swindled, Mayor. What you going to do about it?
Where's Hatfield. Let's see Hatfield.
Bring him out. Bring out Hatfield.

MAYOR: (to SAM) Sam, do something. They may get out of hand.

SAM: Well, I'll try, Mayor -- but like the boys said, it's your party.

CROWD: Bring out Hatfield. Bring out the Rainmaker.

SAM: Just a minute, folks. The Mayor here wants me to start off the meeting with a song. I reckon I can hoax up something appropriate. Figure it'll put Hatfield here on his metal. Now you folks just listen and then join in.

CROWD: What's the matter with the Rainmaker?
Is he scared? Bring him out. Bring out Hatfield.

SAM: (Playing and singing over the crowd.)
Rained all night the day I left, the weather it was fine.
Rained so hard I choked to death. Hatfield, don't you cry.
Come on, folks, join in:
Oh now, Hatfield, Hatfield, don't you cry.
You come from California to disturb the Western sky.
Never rained in forty years till Hatfield hit the town,
The folks all came to watch him bring the rain a pouring down.
Oh now, Hatfield, Hatfield, don't you cry.
Get out there to your towers and disturb the Western sky.
(Some of the crowd join in.)
Oh now, Hatfield, Hatfield, don't you cry.
Get out there to your towers and disturb the Western sky.

WILLIE: (Appearing at right confronts the crowd.)
Kneel, sinners, kneel. Cast off idolatry. Flee the fiery furnace. I find you in wickedness and sloth --

SAM: Now, Willie, you may find us in wickedness but we ain't in sloth. Nothing I'd like better than to stretch out my toes and slosh around in a little sloth.

BENNY: What's sloth, Ma -- mud?

SAM: Means the same thing in this country, son, and we don't see much of it. Now, Mr. Mayor, I believe you have a few words to say --
(SAM gives place to the MAYOR.)

MAYOR: Fellow citizens. We in Medicine Hat are doers, not talkers. We have had four years of drought, but are we discouraged? No.

VOICE: Speak for yourself, Mayor.

MAYOR: Ten days ago we hired Charles Hatfield to set up a rain precipitation and attraction tower here on our home ground. We did not hire him without investigating his reputation. In the past seventeen years Mr. Hatfield has conducted forty successful rainmaking experiments. So, we are privileged, my friends, privileged to take part in the forty-first venture of this new science.

WALT: Look out, Mayor, or you may drown,

TIM: Hatfield's brought so much rain there's frogs roosting in my chicken house.

MAN: Rains dust in this country, don't it Mayor?

MAYOR: Gentlemen, if you please. Mr. Hatfield assures me that he cannot fail. He may be a little late, but he cannot fail. Come up, Mr. Hatfield. Speak to my fellow citizens as you have spoken to me. Mr. Charles Hatfield.

(HATFIELD mounts the platform.)

HATFIELD: My friends, when I came here I told you to be of good cheer. Where there is Hatfield, there is rain. I brought floods to California --

JOE: That's right. I saw him do it. I was there.

HATFIELD: Thank you, sir. Perhaps I should explain that the solutions with which I work are so powerful that great care is required before the final, dynamic ingredient is added. This morning I went out to the towers --

WILLIE: Your towers will crumble like the tower of Babel, Charles Hatfield. The Lord will rend you with fire, impale you with lightning. Your hour is at hand.

HATFIELD: Mr. Mayor --

WILLIE: You will be drowned in your sin, devoured in your pride -- Lost, lost! (There is a sudden sharp explosion of the firecrackers.) Behold, it is a sign. Oh Lord, we have been sent a sign!

CAROLINE: (Coming grimly forward with BENNY and DAVID, holding one by the ear and the other by the back of the neck.)
I'm afraid that weren't no sign, Willie. I reckon that was these kids. Now you behave yourselves.

BENNY: We're sorry, sir.

WILLIE: Brethren, are you saved?

BENNY: I'm afraid not, Mr. Sims.

WILLIE: Do you believe that this man can make the rain fall? Answer me.

DAVID: We hoped so, sir.

WILLIE: You see - even your young are sunk in sin.

BENNY: But Mr. Sims, we only --

WILLIE: Little black sheep, damned through eternity. Lost! Lost!

DAVID: We ain't black sheep --

SAM: Course you ain't sheep -- you're all right. Now, Willie, you better go and light up the rest of your lamps. It's getting real dark. (WILLIE goes.)

BENNY: We didn't do nothing, Mr. Bruce, we only climbed up the towers.

HATFIELD: You climbed the towers!

DAVID: Only part way. We got scared.

HATFIELD: Young man, you might have been killed. You might have destroyed all my work.

BENNY: We were only trying to help. Our wheat's dying, Mr. Hatfield.

WALT: Yeah, what about it, Hatfield? Our wheat's dying.

WOMAN: Another two days and we're finished.

Another WOMAN: You've had ten days. You promised rain in ten days.

MAN: Our wheat's dying, dying, do you hear that?

TIM: That don't matter to Hatfield. He's all right.

MAN: He's got plenty of water in his private bath.

WOMAN: Rainmaker. Some rainmaker ---

A MAN: Run him out of town, boys. Let's run him out of town.

MAYOR: Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen, one minute please ---

(The crowd advances. Various voices speak, very low, intensely and with an underlying menace born of despair. The voices are not raised but the intensity increases as the crowd nears HATFIELD. The director can use his own judgment about breaking up the speeches and about using 'choral speech' at the climax. It is important though that the crowd remain grounded in reality and if the use of choral speech destroys this effect it is better to keep all lines spoken by individuals in the crowd with a mounting climax. The lines are begun on a soft, almost conversational but ironic note.)

CROWD: We want rain, Hatfield. That's what you promised us.
Our wheat's dying, dying of thirst. Where's your rain, Hatfield?
Looks at us -- these are our best clothes.
We wore them to celebrate the rain you promised us.
We don't run to top hats or tails.
We've been hungry. We've seen our kids go hungry.
We've seen our kids beg for an orange but we couldn't buy it.
Only one orange, Hatfield, but we couldn't buy it.
Maybe we're lazy, Hatfield. We only work sixteen hours a day.
Dawn to dark, dawn to dark.
Maybe we're quitters.
We've been hanging on for a lifetime, that's all. Our lifetime.
Maybe we don't deserve oranges.
Maybe the dust is our inheritance. Dust ...
It sifts under the windows
And up from the floor
And across the fences
And over the houses
And over our hearts.
Dust --

MIRANDA: It buries their hopes and their dreams, blots out their faith, weakens the will.

CROWD: Where's the rain, Hatfield? Where's the rain you promised?
We want rain --- rain --- rain.

(As they advance toward the platform, HATFIELD is visibly shaken.)

HATFIELD: Ladies and Gentlemen. (His throat is dry.) Ladies and --

CROWD: Rain.

SAM: (Aware of the taut nerves, steps easily between the crowd and the platform on which Hatfield is standing.)
Take it easy, folks. Take it easy. Don't forget how to laugh. You've always been able to laugh before. You can do it now. Why there's Ed and Ella Jones -- remember the last good crop they had four years ago. Best crop in the country and they were hailed out in a half hour. What'd they do? They made ice cream out of the hail stones that had smashed their wheat into the ground. They invited the neighbours in and somehow they laughed. Here, Walt, have an umbrella. Good for sun-stroke. Tim. Charlie.
(He hands out the umbrellas, giving one to Hatfield. The crowd wavers, surprised.)
Now folks, we've told Hatfield our troubles. How about giving him a chance to tell us his. He's got them all right. We all have. Neighbours, I want you to let him finish his talk. Mr. Hatfield.

HATFIELD: (Wiping his brow.) Thank you, Mr. Bruce. Thank you. I know the past ten days have been anxious days. You called me here to this great country to do you a service. I can render that service. Conditions have been adverse, very adverse. But believe me, they will be overcome. In a few days at most, the desert will flourish as the rose of Sharon. The land will blossom and the streams run swift. Save your umbrellas, friends, you will need them. Where there is Hatfield, there is --
(There is a low growl of thunder.) Listen!

(A Silence.)

(Somewhere in the crowd there is a whisper -- "Thunder.")

CROWD: Thunder.
Did you hear it?
I heard thunder.
Thunder in the West.
Thunder.

A MAN: (Jumping up on the platform.) The clouds are banking beyond the towers.

CROWD: Clouds. Clouds beyond the towers. Clouds, out West.

(The thunder rolls again a little louder.)

HATFIELD: (A new man.) Look folks, look. It's raining out West, beyond the towers. Can you see it? Those streaks in the sky. It's raining.

JOE: He's done it, folks. Hatfield's brought rain.

(A crash of thunder.)

CROWD: A good rain could save us.
It's got to come this way. Wind's in the right direction.

TIM: That's my place, do you hear? That's my place where it's raining. It's hitting my place.

CROWD: Oh God, give us a rain --- one good steady rain.

HATFIELD: (All his confidence regained.) Ladies and Gentlemen, the time has come. I must get to the towers at once. Let no one approach. You're going to get your rain.
(He jumps down and runs off left.)

A MAN: Look out West. It's blacker than the Ace of Spades. Must be a cloudburst.

A MAN: Come on, let's follow him. See what happens.
(Some of the Crowd go off.)

JOE: (With his megaphone.) Step up, folks. Buy your tickets. Ten cents. How many inches of rainfall. Place your bets, boys. Get in on the fun. Put your money on a sure thing. All right, Brother ... how many?
(Several men crowd round JOE to purchase tickets.)

MIRANDA: Know the future. Madame Miranda reveals the past, the future. All the secrets of the Orient.

TIM: It's hitting my place. Can't help it. Do you hear that? (He's on a rocket to the moon.) Boy oh boy. (To BENNY) Got any more of those firecrackers?

BENNY: Got six.

TIM: Use 'em, boy, use 'em. (There is a roll of thunder.) Sam, do you see that? Right over my place. Bet that lightning burnt my house down. I'll build a new house seven stories high. Do something, Man, do something.

SAM: What do you want me to do, Tim?

TIM: Sing ... play ... dance ... Do 'em all. Anything. By God, what a country, what a country.

(SAM breaks into 'Dance with the Gal with a hole in her stocking' or 'Turkey in the Straw', tapping his foot as he plays.)

TIM: Come on, Sarah. We're only forty once. (He starts calling the dance.) And all join hands and circle to the left. Get in here, Jimmy. Ed, Caroline ...

JIMMY: (Who has found CISSY.) Shall we?

(CISSY nods. The dance is on, with Tim calling loud and fast.)

(As the dance finishes, Sarah laughs breathlessly.)

SARAH: Stop it, Sam. I'm plumb wore out.

JOE: (On the platform.) Hatfield's climbing the towers, folks. He's climbing the East tower. That bank of clouds is dark and high. Shows what science can do.

CHRIS: (Coming through with his stand.) Ice cold. Home made. How about it?

ED: Here, Chris. You take a glass over to the lady in the blue hat -- with my compliments. (He gives CHRIS a dime.)

SARAH: (Twinkling at him.) Crazy.

JOE: Hatfield's up, folks. He's at the top. What are we staying here for? Let's go. Let's go watch Hatfield. (The crowd follow him out.)

JIMMY: You want to go, Cissy?

CISSY: You go. I'll wait for you here.

JIMMY: Promise?

CISSY: Oh yes, I promise.

JIMMY: Don't go way now. (He goes.)

ED: Coming, Sam?

SAM: Too tired.

ED: I've got to follow the crowd. See what happens. (He goes out.)

CISSY: Madame, Madame Miranda?

MIRANDA: What is it, little lady?

CISSY: Would you -- could you tell me --

MIRANDA: Your future, child. Of course. Come in. (Pausing at the door of the tent.) You're falling in love, little lady, falling in love for the first time.

CISSY: Oh, how did you know?

MIRANDA: (Looking at the shining face.) The stars, child. It's all there, shining in the stars. (They go into the tent.)

SARAH: (To MARG and SAM who are left with her on stage.) My, this tastes good. (Drinking lemonade.) If we get a rain now, my flowers will pick up. They've been awful thirsty.

MARG: Your tulips are beautiful.

SARAH: Yes. I've been giving them well water.

MARG: They're so gay.

SARAH: I've got some more in the car. Come along, I'll give you some.

MARG: Oh no.

SARAH: Come on. (Taking her arm.) I want you to have them. (They go out right.)

(SAM is left alone on the stage until JODY comes in from down left.)

SAM: Hi, Jody.

JODY: Evening, Sam.

SAM: You on tonight?

JODY: Yeah, man. Medicine Hat ... Moose Jaw ... Regina ... Winnipeg ... and back again. (Jumping on the platform and looking off.) I hope those clouds mean something more than just a shower. All the way along the run, it's the same -- hot and dry.

SAM: Oh Western wind, when wilt thou blow
That the small rain down can rain?

JODY: Christ, that my love were in my arms
And I in my bed again. (Their voices are very quiet.)

SAM: You know that too?

JODY: (Jumping down.) Learned it from you. (He smiles.) Last year.

(The sky is beginning to darken and continues to do so until the end of the play. Willie, the Lamplighter, comes in -- there is a flash of lightning and thunder. WILLIE hurries across the stage and pauses below the platform. SAM and JODY are sitting on the steps at back.)

WILLIE: Now the time is at hand. The towers will crumble. The blasphemer will perish. The lake of fire and the branding iron await. Now's your chance, Lord. Smite him down. Smite the sinner down. (He goes out left.)

SAM: Poor old Willie sure wants to see folks suffer.

JODY: Yeah, boy.

(SARAH and MARG come back with the flowers.)

SARAH: Sam, they phoned in from out West. They've had a near cloudburst. Over an inch of rainfall, and it's settling down. They think it's going to be general.

SAM: Say, that's fine, Sarah. It's getting darker all right.

SARAH: I should have known Hatfield could do it. My corns have been hurting all day.

MARG: Oh, if it only hits our place.

SARAH: It will, you'll see. (Wrapping the flowers.) Glory be, I'd almost stopped hoping.

MARG: You too?

SARAH: (Looking at her and with swift understanding.) Not quite. Not like when I was your age. I used to expect things to be smooth. Takes a long time to learn that struggle is the first law of life. Shall I put these here? (She indicates the suitcase.)

MARG: Thank you.

SARAH: That your suitcase?

MARG: Yes.

SARAH: Going visiting?

MARG: I planned on it.

SARAH: Seems a woman never can plan a holiday. When things are bad you can't leave your old man and when they're good you don't want to leave. Only thing you can do is both go fishing now and then.

(There is a sharp roll of thunder. The two women move towards the left and stand together looking off.)

SAM: Did you feel that, Jody?

JODY: Yeah, I felt it.

SAM: (Softly and with much emotion.) God, Jody, it's raining. Do you know that? The small rain's raining down.

TOM: (Entering from the back, nods at SAM and JODY and sees MARG down left.) Marg -- (He moves toward her.)

MARG: Tom --

TOM: (Tight lipped.) We'd better go down and get your ticket.

MARG: Tom! It's raining.

TOM: Little late for us, isn't it? (He glances at the sky.) Joke eh?

MARG: Tom, listen to me.

(The thunder sounds again and on top of it the sound of the crowd cheering and singing off stage. The Crowd surges in, Hatfield on the shoulders of two of the men. They are singing to the tune of John Brown's Body.)

CROWD: Hatfield raised his towers up until they reached the sky.
Hatfield raised his towers up until they reached the sky.
Hatfield raised his towers up until they reached the sky.
And the rain came a tumbling down.

Glory, Glory, Halleluia
Glory, Glory, Halleluia
Glory, Glory, Halleluia
The rain came a tumbling down.

(As the Crowd comes in TOM, MARG and SARAH move back. SAM and JODY move over left. The crowd bear HATFIELD to the centre platform. As they finish the song JOE, standing beside his platform at right, cries "Speech, Hatfield! Speech." The crowd takes it up. CISSY and MIRANDA have come out of the tent. JIMMY, seeing CISSY, leaves the crowd and goes over to her. They link arms and move nearer HATFIELD. MIRANDA stands beside her tent.)

HATFIELD: (Simply and quietly.) My friends, go home, rejoice. Put up your cars and your wagons. The roads are going to be too muddy to use them. Sleep in the morning. Take it easy. Mend your harness. Clean up your machine shed. You've got a million dollar rain on your hands. Your crops are saved.

(The Crowd cheers.)

HATFIELD: Friends, I told you I'd do it. I've fulfilled my contract. Where there is Hatfield there is --

CROWD: Rain. (Cheers.)

(A Voice in the Crowd takes up the song again. The Crowd follows it.)

The Lord sent Hatfield to us, in the hour of our need.
etc.
And the rain came tumbling down.

(As they reach the chorus, the Crowd begins to move out, bearing Hatfield on their shoulders. Some stop to buy things from ED and SARAH, who at the end of the song go out after the crowd. (The chorus of the song may be repeated if necessary.) TOM, MARG, JOE, MIRANDA, SAM and JODY are left on the stage.)

JOE: Come on, Randy. We can move this stuff later.

MIRANDA: All right.

JOE: You see. I told you. He did it, didn't he?

MIRANDA: (Pulling his ears.) What long ears you have, show-boy.

JOE: Always belittling. (He goes out ahead of her, afraid to miss anything.)

MIRANDA: (As she passes SAM.) Would you like to know your future, sir?

SAM: Scared to, Lady.

MIRANDA: (Smiling.) I see a big birthday party and it's all yours. (She suddenly leans over and kisses him on the cheek and then goes out.)

SAM: (Surprised.) Why say, Lady -- thanks. (Turning to JODY) Now, wasn't that nice?

(WILLIE enters from left. He stops at the platform and looks up at the sky.)

WILLIE: (Irritated and annoyed at the Lord.) You didn't do it. You didn't smite him down. There won't ever be another chance like that -- those towers raised up, Hatfield on top, thunder and lightning and the people cheering down below. There won't be another chance like that in a hundred years.

SAM: Now, Willie, a hundred years ain't long in the sight of the Lord.

WILLIE: It's too long for me, though. Listen to them out there singing in their pride -- but pride falls, oh sinners, pride falls. (He goes out.)

TOM: Here's a present for you, Marg, for the train. (He gives her a box of candy.)

MARG: Oh Tom, thanks.

JODY: (Starting to take the suitcase.) Train's right on time, Mrs. Arnold.

MARG: Leave it, Jody, please --

JODY: It'll get wet, Mrs. Arnold. Gonna rain hard and long. Those little old gophers be drowned right out of their holes, they ain't careful.

MARG: I'm not going, Jody. I'm going home.

TOM: Marg!

MARG: That's right, Tom.

TOM: You won't be sorry?

MARG: No.

TOM: It's settling down, Marg, to a quiet, steady rain. (They are close together.) May be a miracle at that. Come on, we better be starting home. (He takes up her suitcase. They move off.) Good night, fellows.

SAM: Good night, folks.

(Off stage the long whistle of the train.)

JODY: (Starting down left and turning.) Sam, you reckon Hatfield's responsible?

SAM: What do you think, Jody?

JODY: Golly, I don't know. If he isn't he sure drew a lucky card.

SAM: Won't hurt to believe it was Hatfield, Jody, if you want to.

(The whole scene is played quietly.)

JODY: You see, I've been praying, Sam, praying every night for rain.

SAM: Why, Jody? You don't farm.

JODY: So's all the people I see could stop looking up at the sky and muttering. So's they wouldn't look so broken down.

SAM: I see.

JODY: Now I got to decide whether it's Hatfield or Him. Those towers look mighty imposing, Sam.

SAM: So do the Rocky Mountains, Jody, and they've been there a lot longer.

JODY: (After a pause.) Guess you're right. Reckon I'll put my money on Him. (He glances at the sky. The whistle of the train sounds very near.) Medicine Hat, Moose Jaw, Regina and all points East. Good night, Sam.

SAM: Good night, Jody.

(JODY goes out. SAM is playing "Deep River" very softly as he leaves. There is a flash of lightning and the roll of the thunder. The stage darkens. When the lights dim again Tom is sitting on the bench alone.)

TOM: (Peering at the clipping.) Medicine Hat, May 22nd, 1921. Marg must have thought a lot of Hatfield. Guess I got a lot to thank the Rainmaker for -- a lot of memories.

MARG: (Behind him.) Hatfield, the Rainmaker. Strange, I'd forget him, Tom. I suppose I've too many important things to remember -- things that happened to us -- to remember Hatfield. (The train whistles very near. TOM gets up to go off left.) Don't be lonely, Tom. I'm with you, in your heart, just like I always was. Don't be lonely.

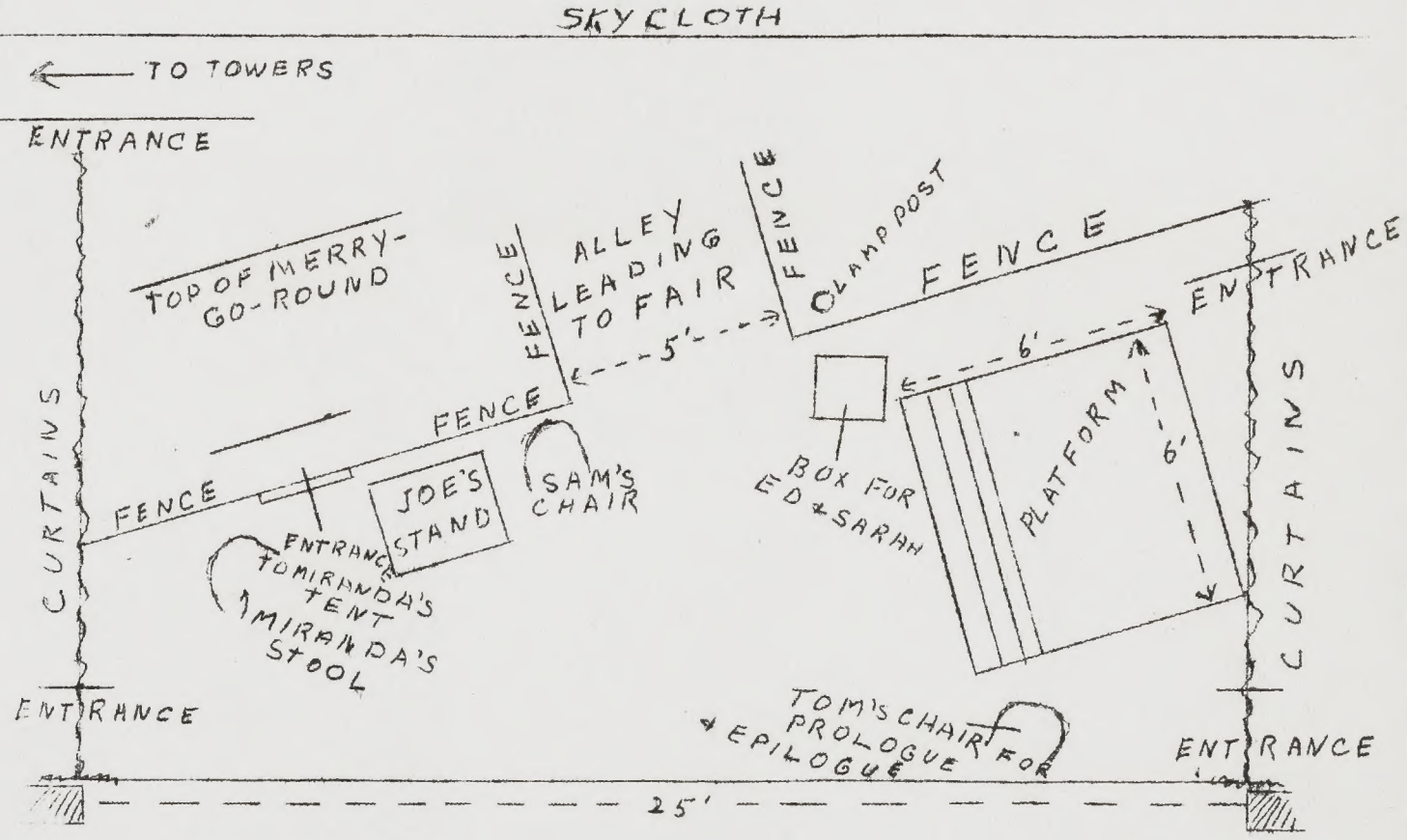
CURTAIN

PRODUCTION NOTES

The Setting.

The setting for The Rainmaker can be described in different ways, - as a corner of a street, as a vacant lot, or as an open space adjoining a street. The general playing area should seem much larger than it probably will be, carrying the imagination of the audience far beyond the physical confines of the set. Actually, it should be sufficiently large and unbroken to permit varying numbers of individual characters to move with freedom from one grouping to another. On the other hand, if this general playing area is too large, the limited number of actors making up the crowd will have difficulty in filling even a part of it, and of giving an impression of many hundreds of people, instead of perhaps a mere dozen.

Below is a sketch of the setting which was evolved for the original production as given at the Banff School of Fine Arts:



By the use of a board fence approximately 7 feet high, running diagonally across the stage, the general playing area was closed in well to the front of the stage. By angling it from down stage right to up stage left, a longer line was obtained, and this line should be continued well off stage into the wings. Also, the angling of the fence permitted greater area stage left to accommodate the platform. Instead of considering this platform as the front steps of a public building, it can be designed more as a roughly erected speaker's platform, decorated with bunting and streamers.

The fair ground in the distance can be suggested by having only the top of a merry-go-round appear above the board fence. So the front part of the stage will not be too crowded, and also to extend the setting into space, the lamppost should be placed behind the fence, appearing to the audience only over the top of it.

The alley leading to the fair ground can also help in extending the set without actually adding much space to it. This alley should not be more than 5 feet wide.

In the above setting, the entrance to Miranda's tent was placed in a break in the fence, with the backing for the tent behind.

In order to keep the scene opened up, all the entrances should be used as variously as possible.

The box for Ed and Sarah can be a large orange crate or something similar. This takes up less space and is easier to handle than a more permanently erected "stall". Ed can carry the box in filled with many of the articles they are going to sell. As they lay their things out, Sarah can cover or decorate it with some sort of cloth.

Joe's stand need be no more than a small table, but solid enough for him to jump on when he comes to the lines about Hatfield climbing the towers, on page 21.

Points of Action.

At the end of the prologue, the single spot on Tom should dim to a blackout just long enough for Tom to get off stage with his chair. The lighting for the play proper should then start to come up slowly, and as it comes first one character and then another drifts on stage, -- first Sam coming through the alley, then Joe from down right, then Miranda with her crystal from her tent, then Tim and Walt from the fair ground. By this time the lights will be fully set, and the action of the play should start.

The reverse procedure can be used just before the epilogue. As Jody is giving his final speech, the lights should start to dim; then when Jody has gone, Sam, whistling or playing his musical instrument, should drift slowly out through the alley. By the time he is gone there is the blackout, and when the single spot comes on again, Tom is in place in his chair. As Tom gives his final line, he can rise and cross slowly up to the alley; as Marg's words follow him, the spot is dimming and the curtains are slowly closing.

So that the stage be not too cluttered up, Chris need not have any permanent set-up for his lemonade stand. A tray supported by a strap around his shoulders, and on which he carries his glasses and pitcher of lemonade, will do just as well.

The Crowd.

The crowd makes its entrance from the fair grounds through the alley. It should never at any time come too far down stage, and at all times the alleyway should be well masked and filled by the actors in the rear, thus giving the impression that there may be many more persons behind. Even when the crowd in its resentment and anger surges forward toward the platform, it should keep well up stage and never leave the alleyway open.

When Hatfield leaves after the peals of thunder to go to the Towers, perhaps half the crowd should follow him out, but a sufficient number should remain to keep the stage filled, and carry on with the dance.

Choral Speech.

As the playwright suggests, the use of choral speech may be left to the discretion of the director. However, if he feels he can manage this, while still keeping the crowd "grounded in reality", it will help tremendously in the build to the climax when the first crack of thunder is heard.

Single lines in the crowd, starting with Walt's "Yes, what about it Hatfield, our wheat's dying", on page 18, should be taken very quickly, with one line topping the other. These lines should be heard by the audience, but they should be given with an increasing volume of mutterings from the crowd.

The first three or four lines of the speech starting "We want rain, Hatfield, that's what you promised us," may be taken individually, or line by line may be picked up by two, three, four and more actors in unison, until the whole crowd is giving the final line, "Maybe the dust is our inheritance. Dust." In other words, the indistinguishable mutterings of the crowd grow into the actual words. At the word "dust", there can be a decided drop, with the next line, "It sifts under the windows," taken by a single light voice, with two or three further voices coming in in unison on each succeeding line, until the further climax is reached with, "And over our hearts. Dust." Then again a second quick drop to Miranda's line, with a final climactic burst from the crowd on, "Where's the rain, Hatfield, where's the rain you promised? We want rain, rain, rain."

Following the first crack of the thunder, there should be another sudden drop, with the whole succeeding scene building quickly into a new excitement, without the strained tension of the previous scene.

The dance has been added since the original version was produced at Banff. This has been done in order to keep the play going, as it were, after the climax has been reached. The dance should be full of wild excitement, not set in any way, but free and spontaneous in appearance and feeling.

Characters.

The character of JODY is visualized by the author as a young and sincere lad, with a gay smile.

WILLIE should be played as a rather weird, rather pathetic creature, and on no account should be treated as a comic individual.

It is not expected that a director will utilize any or all of these ideas. They are offered simply as suggestions which may help the director in devising his own production of the play.